CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-readable media including computer-executable instructions to be executed by a processor to perform the method comprising:

measuring a time interval; and

sending an activity message at least prior to an end of the time interval when user activity is detected.

2. The computer-readable media of claim 1, wherein the user activity includes instant messaging activity.

3. The computer-readable media of claim 2, wherein the user activity includes user activation of a user input device.

4. A method comprising:

measuring a time interval; and

sending, at least as early as the end of the time interval, a message indicative of user activity having occurred within the time interval.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the user activity comprises a user having generated content for an instant message.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the user activity includes user activation of a user input device.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein said user input device comprises a keyboard.

8. A system comprising:

a processor;

memory, coupled to processor, said memory storing instructions to:

measure a time interval; and

send an activity message in response to user activity having occurred at least prior to the end of the time interval.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein said activity message indicates that a user has engaged in the composition of an instant message during the time interval.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein said composition of an instant message comprises entering text.

11. A computer-readable media including computer-executable instructions to be executed by a processor to perform the method comprising:

measuring a time interval; and

deleting an activity indicator after an end of the time interval when an activity message is not received.

12. The computer-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the activity indicator is indicative of instant messaging activity.

13. The computer-readable medium of claim 12, wherein the instant messaging activity comprises includes user activation of a user input device.

14. A method comprising:

measuring a first time interval;

receiving an activity message at the end of the first time interval;

measuring a second time interval that is greater than the first time interval; and

deleting an activity indicator after an end of the second time interval when an activity message is not received.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the activity indicator is indicative of instant messaging activity.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the activity message is received from a computing device that sends an activity message at least as often as after the passage of

every first time interval while instant message activity is taking place at said computing device.

17. A system comprising:

a processor;

memory, coupled to processor, said memory storing instructions to:

measure a first time interval;

receive an activity message at least as often as after the passage of every first time interval; and

delete an activity indicator after an end of a second time interval when an activity message is not received after the passage of said second time interval.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein the activity indicator is indicative of instant messaging activity.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the instant messaging activity comprises includes user activation of a user input device.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein said second time interval is greater than said first time interval.